

# Five Questions: Barbara Hildreth

By Stacy Bandhold, The Record

Barbara Hildreth is the owner of Beauknits, a successful knitting shop at 182 Remsen St. in Cohoes. Hildreth, a retired school administrator, opened Beauknits three and a half years ago. The shop offers classes to all levels of knitters, from learner to advanced, and sponsors Knitter's Night every Friday from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Q Where did your inspiration to knit come from?

A I learned how to knit out of necessity. It was my mother's tradition that when I graduated from high school and college she would knit afghans for us in the colors of our school. After my mother passed away, my son John graduated from college and he asked who was going to make his afghan. I had a year to make an afghan and I learned how to knit. That was in 2000.

Q What are some of the greatest moments that have happened in the shop?

A Well, we have the spirit of Christmas window where people knit hat and mittens for school kids and place them on the tree, this way everyone can see the products that are made. We like to take care of others in the community; we have a charity every month. In January and February we'll be knitting lap robes for the VA Hospital in Albany. I also really enjoy the interaction with the beginner knitter because I'm a teacher and I love to teach. It's all about community and developing the arts and being there for the world.

Q What makes a good yarn?

A It's just like anything you'd buy, if it has a good label its good quality. It has to be of good finer; 100 percent acrylic yarn is not good. You want to use the finest product you can find or you're wasting your time with knitting.

Q Can you name something that surprised you about knitting?

A Knitting is a zen-like behavior. You're doing the same pattern over and over and calming yourself. It's a Middle Eastern mentality of calming your soul. I would knit for 20 minutes after each school day and become totally relaxed. It's great to turn the world off and just do your thing.

Q What is your favorite yarn to work with?

A My lamb's pride wools, they just knit so well. It's top quality fiber and is made in the United States.